HAVE YOUR SAY!

YOU ARE IMPORTANT AS YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY, as well as being important as tomorrow’s future adults. YOU deserve to be brought up in a safe and happy environment, to be consulted, listened to, and heard. YOU have a right to have your say, and we must listen to your opinions. YOU should be consulted on the things that affect you.

[page 1]

YOUR SAY!: The Government’s Plan for Children and Young People

This booklet is the first time that the Government have asked young people what you think of all aspects of your lives – your families, your schools and colleges, your hospitals, your leisure time and your communities. We want to know what you think so that we can try to improve things for you.

This booklet will tell you about the Government’s new Strategy for all children and young people. This Strategy will help to create better services for children and young people, but we can only do this with your help and by listening to your views and opinions.

This is your chance to have your say and help the Government develop the new Strategy for all children and young people.

[page 2]

MEET THE CREW - they’re here for you!

Jay. This is Jay. Whenever you see Jay you will be directed to a page of the Questionnaire where we will ask you YOUR opinion on our plans. You can send in your thoughts and ideas about our plan by filling in the questionnaire and posting it back to us in the envelope provided. Alternatively, you can send us your views by email. Details of all these opportunities are on page 12 of this booklet, and on the Children and Young People’s Unit website, www.cypu.gov.uk

Ali. This is Ali. Ali has highlighted words that you might be unsure of, where you will be directed to pages 10 and 11 where short explanations are given. These words will be highlighted throughout the booklet.

Kash, Kit and C-PU (the dog) will also pop up here and there to help steer you through this booklet.
INTRODUCING

Jay: “This is John Denham, the Minister for Young People. The Prime Minister appointed him to be in charge of the Children and Young People’s Unit and the new Strategy for children and young people. He is responsible for making sure that all children and young people across England get a chance to have their say about their services, and that those views are heard.”

“When the Prime Minister set up the Children and Young People’s Unit last year, he asked them to develop a new Strategy for children and young people that would cover all of the services that help children and young people.

To make sure that the new Strategy will work, I want to ask everyone who has an interest in the lives of young people what they think of it – and that’s what this document is for.

So why don’t you tell us what you think of the Strategy?

Read this booklet, fill in the questionnaire and send it back to the Children and Young People’s Unit. Your views will help to shape the new Strategy and to make a difference for other children and young people.”

John Denham, Minister for Young People

Ali: “What is this Strategy all about then?”

When the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, set up the Children and Young People’s Unit in 2000, he asked the Unit to develop a Strategy covering all services for children and young people – such as your education services and health services. The Children and Young People’s Unit’s task is to improve for all children and young people in all parts of England.

In order to do this we will need to look at all aspects of your lives, like:

- Health and well-being – your physical and emotional health, as well as doctors and hospitals, and making sure that you are happy and healthy
- Leisure – what you enjoy doing in your spare time
- Achievement – your personal achievements in and out of school and college
- Crime – making sure that you are safe from crime and threat of crime
• Environment – how you feel about and think of your home and your community
• Families – feeling loved and cared for as part of your family
• Communities – feeling a part of, and getting involved in what goes on in your community

Jay: “Turn to Part 1 of your questionnaire”

[page 5]

Jay: “Why do we need a Strategy for children and young people?”

Children and young people make up about 20% of England’s population, and each and every one of you is important as an individual.

It is important that we think about the services that you need to help you while you develop, and we are committed to listening to what you have to say about those services.

While there are lots of services for children and young people at the moment, they don’t always work as well as they could do. This could be because the services are not the right type for you, aren’t in the right place, or aren’t there to help at the time when you need them most.

For example, statistics tell us that some young men feel uncomfortable using health service because they don’t like talking to female staff about their personal problems.

This shows how important it is to try to design services around the needs of young people – in this case, young men. Research has shown that services are more likely to be effective if they consider what the people who use the service think.

But this is only one example about young men and the health service. What about all the other different people and all the other different services? Services can often be poorly carried out and don’t do as much as they could to listen to, and help, children and young people.

Every year the Government spends over £35 billion on thousands of different services for children and young people. Each of these services is designed to help children and young people at a particular stage of their lives. We need to make sure that you’re getting the best services out of this money.

Jay: “Turn to Part 2 of your questionnaire”

[page 6 & 7]

OUR VISION is to make it possible for all young people to have all of these things:
The chance to grow up in a place where you are happy, with people who love and care for you.

The chance and the support to do the best that you possibly can in all parts of your lives.

The chance to have a say in your local community and to make a difference. For example, you might want to suggest that a youth club is set up or that your local park is changed to make it better. Adults should help children and young people to speak out.

Services that will help you and your families. The people who provide these services (doctors, teachers, police officers, social workers, nurses and others) must all talk to each other and listen to children and young people so that you have the best possible services.

Support while you grow up and make decisions about your relationships, your education and your future.

The chance to live in a community where there are all sorts of different people from different races and different backgrounds, with different experiences.

The chance to live in a place where you are safe from harm, safe from bullying and safe from crime.

An end to being disadvantaged, unhappy or feeling left out.

The chance to take part in activities like sport, music, art and drama and to enjoy yourself.

Jay: “Turn to Part 3 of your questionnaire”

Ali: “How can we tell if what we are doing, our services, are working?”

In the past Government has often failed to judge how well services are actually working for young people and instead have only looked at how much money is going into them.

We need to judge whether things are getting better for children and young people by how much actually changes in their lives as a result of these services.

We want to do this by looking at real life changes – at what comes out as well as what is put into services. We want to make sure that services are working and to make sure, for example, that you are doing better at school as a result of the education service improving, or that you have safer and cleaner places to go with your friends as a result of leisure services improving.

We can measure your success through exams at school, but it isn’t so easy to measure how well we are doing in areas like health, crime and racial abuse. For this reason, we have made three central themes for our plan:
1) Reducing the number of you who are from disadvantaged families, and reducing the number of you who feel that you don't fit in with others in your schools, communities or families.

2) Supporting you as you grow up and develop. We need to help you most at times when your lives are changing. For example, when you’re changing school, moving home, or if your family breaks up.

3) Making sure that you don’t feel less important than anyone else because of the way you look, your race, your sex, your disability or your age.

We want to measure your health and happiness, whether you are enjoying yourself and making achievements in your lives, and whether you take part as young citizens in your communities. We want you to be safe from crime and in a position where you feel safe, included and responsible.

Jay: “But how can we actually measure these things?”

Kash: “We can measure these by looking at things like:

- How healthy you and other young people are
- How you and other young people are achieving at school or college
- Young people who are very ill (for example those in hospital or who have to have a lot of time away from school or college)
- How much you know about what the Government does for children and young people, and how involved you are in your local communities
- How involved you are in sport, drama, music and other activities you like
- How many children and young people are victims of crime and how many commit crime
- In which ways and how many of you feel left out for being different because of the way you look, your disability, your race, your sex or your age.

Jay: “Turn to Part 4 of your questionnaire”

[page 10 & 11]

**WORD BUSTER**

Here we have explained some words that you might be unsure of.

**Children and Young People’s Unit:** The Children and Young People’s Unit (CYPU) was set up by the Prime Minister to improve things for all children and young people across all parts of England.
Community: A community is the place where you live. It’s the streets, parks, shops and houses near to you. It’s also all the people who live in these places, you and your neighbours.

Consultation: This is where you are asked what you think of certain things – in this case, about the Government’s Strategy for children and young people. The Government consults with people because they need their help and views to make things more effective.

Disadvantaged: Disadvantaged means not having as much as most other people. For example, not having as much money, or as much open space to hang out in with your friends.

Environment: This is the place where you live and the atmosphere in which you live, and how you feel in a place. It’s also used to describe trees, plants and nature – the environment of the whole world.

Government: The Government is in charge of the country, and creates the laws about your schools, your hospitals and your communities. The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, is the head of the Government, and he appoints Ministers to help him make sure that the country runs well.

Ministers: Ministers are Members of Parliament (MPs) who have been chosen by Prime Minister to be in charge of certain things such as education or health in Government.

Services: Services are plans that are put into action to help specific people. Your doctor, your teacher or your local police officers provide services by helping you when you’re ill, helping you to learn, and by making sure that you’re safe in your community.

Strategy: A Strategy is another word for a plan. In this case, ‘Strategy’ refers to the plan that the Government are developing for improving all aspects of children and young people’s lives.

Jay: “So now what?”

Ali: “We want to know what you think!”

To have your say, fill out the questionnaire and post it back to us.

We really want to hear your views and opinions. Below are ways in which you can contact us and be involved in talking about the contents of this booklet:

- Hotline – if you have any questions, you can contact Helen at the Children and Young People’s Unit on 020 7273 5806. (Please ask permission from the person who pays the bill if you’re not using your phone. If you like, we can call you straight back).
- Email – if you have any questions, or would like another copy of this booklet, you can email Helen at new.strategy@cypu.gsi.gov.uk If you like using the internet, please ask your parent, carer or teacher first.
• Post – you can also write to **Helen** at the Children and Young People’s Unit with your ideas. The Children and Young People’s Unit address is:

Children and Young People’s Unit, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA

[page 13]

• If you’d rather have the version of this document that’s aimed at younger people, you can contact Helen at the Children and Young People’s Unit by phone, email or post.

• The Children and Young People’s Unit is also running lots of small discussion groups across England. Just some of the places that we will be going to include Cornwall, Blackburn, Durham, Manchester, Norfolk and London. We also want to talk to loads of different young people – including those of you who are disabled, are in or leaving care, and are from black or ethnic minority backgrounds.

If you’d like to join one of these groups and have your say on the Strategy, do contact the Children and Young People’s Unit or look on our website ([www.cypu.gov.uk](http://www.cypu.gov.uk)) to find out where and when your nearest workshop is happening.

• This document is also available in Braille format. If you would like a copy of this document in Braille, contact the Children and Young People’s Unit

Thank you for reading this document. We hope you’ll fill in the questionnaire and enjoy making a big difference for other children and young people.

We’d like to say thank you to everyone that helped with making this booklet. Special thanks go to:

Adam, Adrian, Aloha, Ash, Becky, Dean, Davinia, Graham, Jack, Liam and Robert.

Steve, Neil, Joe and Elvis, and particularly to Nina O’Farrell.
HAVE YOUR SAY!

[page 1]
YOUR SAY: Our BIG Plan for Children and Young People

The Government think that ALL children and young people should have happy lives and a happy future. We want YOU to tell US how we can make sure this happens, and what you think you need to be happy as you grow up. We want to show our ideas and ask you what you think the Government should do for all children and young people.

Jay: “The Government is chosen by all the people in the country who are over 18 years old. The Government is in charge of the country, and makes laws about your schools, your hospitals and your community. The Prime Minister is in charge of the Government. His name is Tony Blair and he has lots of people called Ministers and Members of Parliament (known as MPs) to help him.”

[page 2]
MEET THE CREW …

Introducing…

Kit “This is Kit. Her name stands for Keep In Touch and this is what she wants you to do. She wants you to Keep In Touch with the Government by telling them what you think of their new plan. You can do this by filling in the activity book that comes with this booklet. When you have finished, you can put it in the envelope we’ve given you, and post it back to us. Kit will tell you when to do the next activity.

Kit: “I’ll tell you when to go to your Activity Book. The activity book is part of what we call a consultation exercise. Some of you might prefer to fill out the written parts, others to do the drawing and games. You might even want to do both!”

Jay: “This is Jay. He will help to explain some words for you. You can also look some of these words up in the word buster on page 10. Words that are in word buster will be in bold writing like this in this booklet.”

Ali, Kash & C-PU. Kit and Jay will also be helped by Ali, Kash and C-PU. C-PU’s name stands for the Children and Young People’s Unit. The Children and Young People’s Unit has a job of making things better for all services for children and young people.

[page 3]
Kash: “This is John Denham. He is the Minister for Children and Young People.”
Kit: “The Prime Minister chose him to speak out for children and young people in England. He is the Minister who is in charge of the Children and Young People’s Unit and our plan for all children and young people. The Minister has the job of making sure that all the views of children and young people in England are heard.”

C-PU: “The Children and Young People’s Unit has the job at looking at ways of making things better for all children and young people.”

This is the first time that the Government have asked children and young people about all the different things in your life. The Government wants to make a new plan that will tell everybody how we can make life better for all children and young people.

We need YOUR help to make this plan

This new plan is important for things like:

- Your Schools
- Your Hospitals
- Your Family
- Your Parks and Play Areas
- Your Community

Kash: “Why do we need a plan for Children and Young People?”

THE DREAM: Our Big Picture

Ali: “Children and young people are important. We need a plan to make growing up a happy time for all children and young people.”

Kit: “The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a plan to make all children and young people in the world as happy as possible.”

The Government spends a lot of money on services for children and young people. We want to make sure that these services help you, and the people who care for you.

Kit: “But sometimes, these services don’t help us much as they should. We want to change this with our new plan. We want to know what you think of our plan for making things better.”

Kit: “Turn to Part 1 of your activity book”
OUR DREAM is to make it possible for you and your friends to have all of these things:

- The chance to grow up in a place where you are happy, with people who love and care for you.
- The chance and the support to do the best that you possibly can in all parts of your lives.
- The chance to have a say in your local community and to make a difference. For example, you might want to suggest that a youth club is set up or that your local park is changed to make it better. Adults should help children and young people to speak out.
- Services that will help you and your families. The people who run these services (doctors, teachers, police officers, social workers, nurses and others) must all talk to each other and listen to children and young people so that you have the best possible services.
- Help as you grow up and help to make decisions about your relationships, your education and your future.
- The chance to live in a community where there are all sorts of different people from different races and different backgrounds and with different experiences.
- The chance to live in a place where you are safe from harm, safe from bullying and safe from crime.
- An end to being disadvantaged, unhappy or feeling left out.
- The chance to take part in activities like sport, music, art and drama and to enjoy yourself.

Kit: “Turn to Part 2 in your activity book.”

Kash: “How can we tell how well our plans and actions are working?”

Kit: “How will we measure how well our plan is working?”

Ali: “How will we see if things are getting better for children and young people?”

We think that we should judge how good your services are by how much changes and gets better for YOU. We want to see REAL changes in YOUR lives. These are the real things that we think are important.

The Government have often looked at how much money they’re putting into services, but haven’t always paid as much attention to what difference that money makes.
We want to make sure that services are working and to make sure, for example, that you are doing better at school because you have fewer children in class, and teachers who help you.

Jay: “But how can we actually measure these things?”

Kash: “We can measure these by looking at things like:
- How much you and other children are enjoying school
- Children who are very ill (for example those who are in hospital or who have to have a lot of time off from school)
- In which ways and how many of you feel left out for being different
- If you are taking part in sport, drama, music and things you enjoy

Kit: “Turn to Part 3 in your activity book”

[page 10 & 11]

WORD BUSTER
Here we have explained some words that you might be unsure of.

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Ministers: Ministers are Members of Parliament (MPs) who have been chosen by the Prime Minister to be in charge of certain things such as education or health in Government.

Services: Services are plans that are put into action to help people. Your doctor, your teacher or your local police officers provide services by helping you when you are ill, helping you to learn and by making sure that you are safe in your community.

[page 12]

YOUR CHANCE TO TELL US WHAT YOU THINK…

DO YOU WANT TO HAVE YOUR SAY?

DO YOU WANT TO TELL THE GOVERNMENT WHAT YOU THINK OF THEIR PLANS?

YES?

Then all you have to do is fill in your activity book and pop it in the post using the envelopes we’ve given you – you won’t even need a stamp. We will take your answers seriously and they will help to make the future plans for all children and young people in England.

We really want to hear your views and opinions. Below are ways in which you can contact us and be involved in talking about the contents of this booklet.

- Hotline – if you have any questions, you can contact Helen at the Children and Young People’s Unit on 020 7273 5806 for some help. (Please ask permission from the person who pays the phone bill if you’re not using your phone. If you like, we can call you back).
- Email – if you have any questions, or would like another copy of this booklet, you can email Helen at new.strategy@cypu.gsi.gov.uk You can also check out our website www.cypu.gov.uk (if you like using the internet please ask your parent, carer or teacher first).
- Letter – you can also write to Helen at the Children and Young People’s Unit using the envelope we’ve given you.

Children and Young People’s Unit, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA

[page 13]
Thank you for reading this document. We hope you’ll fill in the activity book and enjoy making a big difference for other children and young people.

- If you think you would like to read the other version of this booklet that is aimed at older young people, you can also contact Helen at the Children and Young People’s Unit by phone, email or post.
- The Children and Young People’s Unit is also running lots of small groups across England to talk to lots of different children and young people about this plan. If you’d like to come along to one of these and have your say with other children and young people, do contact Helen.
- This document is also available in Braille format for children with visual impairments. If you would like a copy of this document in Braille, contact the Children and Young People’s Unit.

We’d like to say thank you to everyone that helped with making this booklet. Special thanks go to:

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THANK YOU!